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ABSTRACT

This paper explores recent research, current practices, and implications for the future development of job placement programs in vocational education. An introduction views the relationship of job placement programs to vocational education and the importance of continual research in this area in light of three factors: responsibility for job placement, accountability, and socioeconomic factors. Section 2 explores definitions and models for job placement programs. It looks at career guidance and career education, state models and guidelines for implementing job placement services, and staff development models. These common elements of job placement programs are discussed: program planning and coordination, program operations, career guidance and preemployment preparation, followup evaluations, and follow-through. Section 3 examines variations in program implementation among states, between secondary and postsecondary programs, and in organization. In the next section, legislation with which program planners and operators should be familiar is summarized, and other components of today's programs are reviewed, such as services for special populations, preemployment skills training, and information systems. Section 5 suggests future directions, including further implementation of effective programs through dissemination of information about effective programs, staff development, and improved program evaluation procedures. (YLB)

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Information Series No. 239

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JOB PLACEMENT PROGRAMS FOR THE FUTURE

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FOREWORD

Job Placement Programs for the Future explores recent research, current practices, and implications for future development in the field. The author suggests that although program implementation is underway, the challenges for the future are dissemination of information about exemplary programs and improvement of evaluation procedures to enable the development of effective programs.

This paper is one of seven interpretive papers produced during the fourth year of the National Center's knowledge transformation program. The review and synthesis in each topic area is intended to communicate knowledge and suggest applications. Papers in the series should be of interest to all vocational educators including teachers, administrators, federal agency personnel, researchers, and the National Center staff.

The profession is indebted to Ms. Connye Barrow for her scholarship in preparing this paper. Dr. Ray Wasil of the Ohio State Department of Education; Jessie Teddlie of Hurst, Texas; and Dr. Linda Pfister of the National Center for Research in Vocational Education contributed to the development of the paper through their critical review of the manuscript. Staff on the project included Alta Moser, Shelley Grieve, Raymond E. Harlan, Dr. Robert Bhaerman, Dr. Judith Samuelson, and Dr. Jay Smink. Editorial assistance was provided under the supervision of Janet Kiplinger of the Field Services staff.

Robert E. Taylor
Executive Director
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Job placement programs have become an increasingly important aspect of educational programming for a number of reasons. The use of student placements in program-related employment as a measure of accountability for vocational education programs has focused the attention of vocational educators on the placement process. Increasing concern for the rights of a variety of special populations has resulted in attempts to provide placement services for these individuals. Competition for jobs has intensified as technology and foreign competition have produced changes in the United States economy. The resulting increased demand for job placement programs has increased the difficulty of providing such services.

Job placement programs have been mandated in several states. In others, schools have developed programs either alone or in cooperation with other community agencies. With a number of exemplary programs now operating in various configurations, the direction for the future is the further implementation of effective programs through the dissemination of information about effective programs and the improvement of program evaluation procedures.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to explore recent research, current practices, and implications for the future development of job placement programs in vocational education. The past ten years have witnessed a tremendous surge of interest in job placement, as evidenced by (1) federal- and state-sponsored research and development, (2) federal and state legislation, and (3) increased efforts by local schools and other agencies to help students and graduates obtain employment.

An important distinction to make is the one between job placement *services* and job placement *programs*. Efforts to assist individuals in obtaining employment may be designated as job placement services. A job placement program is, on the other hand, a group of services, including job placement, that meets employment-related needs of students, schools, and communities. This paper (1) explores definitions and models for job placement programs, (2) reviews the accepted common elements of these programs, (3) examines organizational variations in program implementation, and (4) suggests future directions.

Background

The relationship of job placement programs to vocational education and the importance of continual research in this area must be viewed in light of three factors. First, job placement assistance is seen as one of the responsibilities of guidance counselors in most theories of career development. Many writers have pointed out a need for improved effectiveness in this area. Second, the employment of vocational education program graduates in jobs related to their vocational courses provides the primary accountability and program improvement measures for vocational education. Finally, socioeconomic factors that increase the demand for job placement programs also increase the difficulty of providing these services.

These three factors emphasize the need for programs that meet individual, school, and community needs. They reflect our growing awareness that the individual is an important resource, and that the quality of the individual's education has a direct impact on the national economy.

Responsibility for Job Placement

Job placement appears to be an accepted but neglected responsibility of career counselors. The consensus is that counselors have neither the time, expertise, nor resources to provide job placement services. Shippen (Shippen and Wasil 1977) asserts that whereas the demand for counselors to provide school job placement services has been increasing, counselor education programs have provided little or no training in this area.

Hoyt et al. (1972) and Wirtz (1975) indicate that the employment-related aspects of career guidance responsibilities have not been fulfilled, with job placement the most neglected of these.

Inadequate staff time, especially that needed for community contact with potential employers, is a commonly reported problem (Barrow 1977; *A Program Review* 1978). Wirtz suggests that job placement is usually separated from career guidance in schools because guidance was originally designed to help students to make the transition to higher education.

Thus, although job placement is traditionally a responsibility of counselors, the relationship of job placement programs to counseling is somewhat unclear. Several responses to this problem appear to be emerging. Career development theorists (Gysbers and Moore 1974) and professional organizations (Pinson, Gysbers, and Drier 1981) document the need for specialized placement staff who function as part of a career guidance team.

Increased opportunities for preservice and inservice training appear to be available to a variety of school personnel. One such program is the Placement Specialist Training Project, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (Ramp 1977, 1978). Many state departments of education are conducting inservice conferences and workshops. The National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation, the Pre-Employment & Placement Association, and the Michigan Association of School Placement Personnel offer job placement training programs. The major trend in the operation of job placement programs, however, appears to be a response to the need for joint efforts by education agencies, public employment and training agencies, and employers (Hoyt et al. 1972).

Accountability

Since the employment of vocational education program graduates in jobs related to their training continues to be the major criterion by which vocational education programs are evaluated, job placement programs must be effective. According to the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education: "Every school should be an employment agency, and those not providing a job along with an education do not have a complete program . . ." (Michigan Department of Education 1980).

The Vocational Education Section (Title II) of the Education Amendments of 1976 (P.L. 94-482) requires follow-up studies of students and employers and states that:

> Each state shall evaluate by using data collected whenever possible, by statistically valid sampling techniques, each such program which purports to impart entry-level job skills according to the extent which program completers and leavers (i) find employment in occupations related to their training, and (ii) are considered by their employers to be well trained and prepared for employment, except that in no case can pursuit of additional education or training by program completers or leavers be considered negative in these evaluations. (quoted in Michigan Department of Education 1980, p. 4)

This perspective of the importance of job placement programs creates a dilemma. A review of the literature and practice provides little evidence of a relationship between school job placement programs and vocational education programs via evaluative follow-up studies of students and employers. Whereas follow-up studies are mandated, placement programs are merely recommended. As a result, required follow-up reports rarely reveal program evaluation activities or even refer to efforts by schools to assist students in obtaining the employment reported.

The question left unanswered in this apparent separation of job placement programs from follow-up activities is this: What are we really evaluating through follow-up studies? If vocational education programs are found to be ineffective as a result of unsatisfactory percentages of students entering related employment, what needs to be changed to improve those figures—job placement programs, job placement services, or educational programs?

Socioeconomic Factors

The third perspective from which job placement is viewed is a socioeconomic one. While educators may not view school programs in relation to the needs of society, legislators and policymakers have recognized the importance of the transition from school to work. Evidence of this is found in the writings of former Secretary of Labor, Willard Wirtz (1975).

Dr. Reginald Petty, executive director of the National Advisory Council on Vocational Education, also emphasized the importance of this transition in a 1976 address to the Regional Conference on Education/Work and School Placement Services. Dr. Petty stated:

> Congress, in the new educational bill, has committed education to involving large numbers of groups in the whole issue of transition from school to work . . . involvement goes beyond the usually accepted, traditional vocational advisory committee. This is more than a commitment; it is an order. If educators don't do something to bring about closer ties between business, labor, and education, then Congress can and will write stronger legislation. (Wasil 1976a, p. 2)

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) and related regulations provide further documentation of the interrelationship among educational, social, and labor policies. Vocational educators and CETA agencies are required by the act to (1) work together to avoid duplication of training and (2) work with Private Industry Councils and Employment and Training Councils to coordinate efforts with business and industry needs. Priorities on services to special populations, such as handicapped, disadvantaged, and limited-English-speaking persons, and potential school dropouts require schools to cooperate with public agencies and the employment community in providing job-relevant training. Although the terminology may have changed from manpower policy to human resource development, the message remains the same—the educational system is an integral part of the country's economic system.

The responsibility for assisting students in making an effective transition from school to work is primarily that of the school. The employment community and other groups are increasingly concerned about seeing that schools carry out this task effectively. The Georgia State Department of Education (1977), in its guidelines for job placement services, points out that because education is one of the country's largest businesses, it needs to adopt a businesslike approach to marketing its products and to assessing the impact of its products on society.

Title I of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968 (P.L. 90-576) calls for (1) efforts to reduce the high rate of youth unemployment through giving job placement the same priority as that of college placement; (2) provisions for integrated community services for school-to-work transition; (3) guidance activities directed at initial job placement; and (4) improved placement services for handicapped and disadvantaged students.

In 1973, the Florida legislature passed a law requiring the provision of job placement services by schools for non-college-bound students (National Association 1977). The state of Virginia

enacted similar legislation in 1975 (National Association 1977). The issue has recently been considered by several other state legislatures.

The importance of employment-related services for school-age youth is further evidenced by (1) the development of a national network for disseminating accurate occupational information, (2) more stringent U.S. Department of Education requirements for follow-up reports by states and localities, and (3) the growth of joint financial support (from sources such as the federal government, foundations, and business and industry) for job placement programs.

Increasing pressure to evaluate and improve school-based placement services for non-college-bound students comes from various sources. The same factors that have generated this growing demand have added to the complexity of providing such services. These factors include labor market, demographic, and policy changes.

The rapidly changing labor market, which has seen the creation of many new job titles and new fields of work, has made employers aware that they need to work more closely with schools in order to obtain needed skilled workers. It has also made it more difficult for teachers and counselors to remain current in their knowledge of the labor market.

Federal priorities for accountable employment-related training for special populations, such as disadvantaged and handicapped students, potential dropouts, and students with limited-English-speaking ability, add to the requirements for specialized staff skills, increased job development efforts, and more sophisticated reporting techniques.

Reduced funding has made it increasingly difficult to provide staff with released time for job development, public relations, and information gathering related to employment. National studies, such as *High School and Beyond* (Coleman 1981), sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics, document the increasing concern among students about employment, both during schooling and after graduation. The large number of adults returning to school adds yet another dimension to the problem of providing an effective job placement program.

DEFINING JOB PLACEMENT PROGRAMS

Career Guidance and Career Education

Kenneth Hoyt (Hoyt et al. 1972), formerly of the U. S. Office of Career Education, speaks of the need for an improved transition from school to work through comprehensive job placement programs. Hoyt sees this as a means of improving the effectiveness of career education. He asserts, and Wirtz (1975) affirms, that the public employment service is not regarded by schools or employers as having the capacity to deliver job placement services for in-school youth.

The comprehensive job placement programs envisioned by Hoyt would require joint efforts among education, the public employment service, and employers. Communication between educators and employers on local, regional, state, and national levels would be needed for effective programs. Job placement programs are vital to the realization of career education goals. This concept is consistently found in career education literature, along with repeated pleas for joint school-community efforts to serve all students.

A number of counselor educators note the need for school counselors to provide job placement services and for counselor training in the required skills (Herr and Cramer 1972; Shippen and Wasil 1977). Gysbers and Moore (1974), for example, suggest the need for:

> a new conceptualization of career guidance, counseling, and placement as a comprehensive educational program. Such a program should be responsible for assisting individuals in the development of self-knowledge; interpersonal skills; life career planning; and knowledge and understanding of life roles, settings, and events—especially those associated with the worlds of education, work, and leisure. (p. 4)

In a career development model, Drier (1977) lists twenty recommendations for improving career guidance. One of these recommendations is to implement increased job, education, and special needs-based placement activities. It does not receive a high priority in the list. In specifying the types of assistance that future guidance specialists must provide to youth, Drier notes teaching preemployment and job adjustment skills, but limits responsibility to assisting youth to learn about referral sources for placement. Providing students with assistance in locating and obtaining employment appears to be left as an option.

In synthesizing existing career guidance materials for facilitators, Peterson et al. (1978) list eighteen objectives for job placement programs. The objectives are as follows (Handout no. 21):

1. Assist in educational program evaluation
2. Organize data bank for job placement applicants
3. Determine type of job placement program needed

4. Coordinate career planning and placement activities/services
5. Assist students in career planning
6. Persuade employers to hire school-age youth
7. Evaluate and improve job placement program
8. Obtain, post, and update job openings
9. Establish job placement program policies and operating procedures
10. Provide consultant services for faculty
11. Teach job-seeking skills
12. Establish positive employer relationships
13. Implement accountability procedures
14. Screen and refer candidates to job interviews
15. Provide inservice training for job placement staff
16. Promote awareness of job placement program
17. Teach preemployment skills
18. Persuade employers to tailor jobs to fit individuals

State Models and Guidelines

Most state departments of vocational education have funded the development of guidelines for implementing job placement services. For example, Florida defined placement programs in 1973 and required schools to provide job placement services for non-college bound students for a period of one year following graduation or termination from high school (National Association 1977). Provisions were made for occupational information specialists to be assigned to schools from the state employment service. The Virginia legislature passed a similar bill in 1975 (National Association 1977).

Public Act 536 of 1978 revised the Michigan School Code Administrative Rules so that they apply to all school districts. The act states:

> Counseling and guidance staff employed by a school district, which for the purposes of this section may include noncertificated, nonendorsed personnel, shall devote an appropriate portion of working time and effort to employment counseling and placement services for pupils 16-19 years of age who do not intend to enroll in an institution of higher education after graduating from high school or who require or desire employment in conjunction with their continued education. (Michigan Department of Education 1980, p. 2)

The Michigan Placement Competency Training Program provides extensive inservice education programs for school placement personnel. This enables many districts to hire staff qualified through experience gained outside of education and train them to work in school placement programs. A state guide for job placement programs has been developed in Michigan by teams of placement personnel from local and intermediate school districts.

In North Carolina, providing placement services is one of the major roles of vocational guidance personnel. Placement into higher education or into employment for vocational education program graduates and early school leavers constitutes a recordable placement (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction 1981).

The Texas legislature appropriated funds in 1975 for job placement services in local districts (McLeod and Tobias 1980). An Education Professions Development Act of 1970 (EPDA) program has trained and approved job placement program coordinators for Texas schools.[1] Other programs, such as the Texas Vocational Guidance Workshop held in 1979, have trained needed staff. Job program placement personnel are included in the "minimum foundation" or vocational education reimbursement formula for local districts. The Texas Education Agency has sponsored evaluations of local programs that were developed with state funds.

Missouri has developed a Statewide Job Placement Service with State Fair Community College as the principal site of model development, inservice education, and program evaluation. The system promotes comprehensive job placement programs at local schools. Program coordinators provide students with job placement services and preemployment training and do follow-up evaluations. Support and coordination are provided by the statewide program staff (Noland and Cass, n.d.).

The Illinois Department of Adult, Vocational, and Technical Education has funded a research project to develop a model for the implementation of comprehensive job placement services (Barrow, Frisbie, and Matzelle 1976; Barrow 1977). Dissemination and inservice education activities are combined with resources in preemployment skills development (Pollock 1978) and staff training projects (Ramp 1977, 1978).

Fifteen pilot job placement projects were funded in Illinois for two years in the mid-1970s. A system of regional career guidance centers in the state is designed to stimulate and support local school job placement services. Since 1978, statewide inservice education activities—the Pre-Employment & Placement Conferences—have promoted the development of comprehensive local job placement programs. These conferences involve local schools; community agencies; and representatives of business, industry, and labor. The Pre-Employment & Placement (PREP) Association has recently been formed to continue this collaboration (Barrow 1981).

Ohio has been a leader in the development of models and resources for job placement programs. Since 1971, the Akron-Summit County Job Placement Service has provided a model for comprehensive job placement programs. Mitchell (n.d.) notes that the project, like many others, has been supported by vocational education funding for disadvantaged and handicapped youth, along with some CETA funding.

The Ohio legislature reviewed school job placement programs in the state to gather information for use in developing policies related to funding such programs (*A Program Review*

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[1]Education Professions Development Act, P.L. No. 89-329, 79 Stat. 1219 (codified at 20 U.S.C. §§ 1091 et seq. (1970)).

1978). The Ohio State Department of Education provided inservice education activities in Ohio and several other states (Wasil 1976b).

Citizens in Delaware, through a combination of legislation and community action, support a job placement program for students enrolled in general education programs (not enrolled in vocational education or college preparation programs). This program, known as the Jobs for Delaware Graduates Program, operates in virtually all of the state's schools, providing students with classroom instruction in preemployment skills and work attitudes. The program has stringent enrollment requirements.

The extent to which job placement programs have received attention in various states is apparent in a review of the literature. Some examples are the following: Buckingham (1972) reports the success of such a program in Baltimore, Maryland; the Georgia State Department of Education (1977) cites the development there of a program implementation guide for schools; Kim (1980) reviews pilot projects in Indiana; and Gary (1979) reports similar activities in Kentucky. The literature supports the assertion by Wirtz (1975) that job placement program elements are pretty well marked out, although process elements and evaluation procedures need further development.

Staff Development Models

One key to the effective implementation of the programs being developed around the country is competent staff. In the interest of providing such personnel, several activities have taken place. Wasil (1976b) developed a guide for program implementation that has been used widely in staff development. Staff are trained in (1) planning, (2) implementation, (3) operation, and (4) evaluation of programs. These three objectives for job placement programs are recommended: (1) to provide placement and follow-up services for all youth appropriate to their interests, aptitudes, and abilities; (2) to provide for all youth exiting school activities that will help them obtain and retain employment; and (3) to develop communications with employers so that youth exiting schools can successfully enter the labor market.

In a staff development manual for vocational education staff working with disadvantaged and handicapped youth, Johnson et al. (1980) suggest training in job development, job placement, and follow-up evaluations. The training activities include the following: (1) objectives, (2) procedures, (3) sources, and (4) expected outcomes.

Ramp (1978) outlines expected outcomes, training activities, and resources of the Placement Specialist Training Project, a program that was developed at Southern Illinois University in 1976. The competency-based program trained interns to be placement coordinators for local schools. The following competencies were identified: (1) cooperating with other school personnel in the educational process; (2) working with employers; (3) organizing and managing a placement service; (4) providing students with assistance in obtaining jobs, education, and training; and (5) developing good public relations.

The training programs incorporated into events, such as the Regional Conference on Education/Work and School Placement Services sponsored in 1976 by the National Association for Industry-Education Cooperation (Wasil 1976a) and the Pre-Employment & Placement Conference (Barrow 1978), reflect a comprehensive approach to job placement and community involvement.

Program topics further demonstrate a commitment to comprehensive services and community collaboration. They include information about how to do the following: (1) plan programs; (2) utilize a placement advisory committee; (3) use public relations techniques; (4) conduct career days; (5) use career information resources; (6) use computerized guidance resources and student-job matching systems; (7) improve job development techniques; (8) manage student and job information; and (9) conduct follow-up studies and utilize the information obtained.

Common Elements of Job Placement Programs

Martin (in Shippen and Wasil 1977) notes that job placement programs as "defined by the state of Florida include: services to school graduates and leavers depending upon the desire of the individual to obtain gainful employment, to continue education, or to engage in a combination of employment and further education" (p. 6). He also relates that "a definition for school-based placement services found in the Michigan Placement Guide states: 'School-based placement services cover the entire range of assistance offered by a school to help the student develop and implement his or her career plan'" (p. 6).

There is general agreement among writers in the field that a range of job placement services is needed in schools, that these activities must focus on individual development according to individual needs, and that placement must be viewed as a process rather than an event occurring at the completion of education. Whether viewed as job placement; job placement, follow-up, and follow-through; comprehensive placement; or career planning and placement; successful services designed to help students develop and implement career goals involve a program with identifiable common elements. These elements are the following:

- Program planning and coordination
- Program operations
- Career guidance and preemployment preparation
- Follow-up evaluations
- Utilization of follow-up results (follow-through)

Program Planning and Coordination

The first element, program planning and coordination, involves efforts to ensure that the program meets the needs of students, the school, and the community. Local boards of education and administrators should be involved in planning and the assessment of job placement needs, and the identification of resources should be conducted with their assistance. All populations to be served in the school and community should also be involved in the assessment of needs.

A job placement program advisory committee should review identified needs and assist in developing a program plan, including measurable goals and objectives. The planning process should include consideration of (1) staffing, (2) relationships to other school programs, (3) facilities, (4) budget, (5) specific populations to be served, (6) how services are to be delivered, and (7) how each element of the placement program is to be evaluated.

Ongoing activities related to program planning and coordination include (1) coordinating services with related efforts in the school and community; (2) public relations programs; and (3) evaluation of the placement process.

Program Operations

The operational element of placement programs may vary considerably from program to program, depending upon the method chosen for the delivery of services. Basic descriptions, however, include these components: (1) student data, (2) information about employment opportunities and employers, (3) means of matching students with jobs, (4) methods of record keeping, and (5) methods for evaluating program operations. Record keeping and evaluation are frequently neglected, but they are very important to planning effective programs.

One of the distinctions of such a comprehensive placement program is that it provides information on career opportunities, rather than limiting activities to merely placing students in jobs. Methods for matching students with jobs include (1) screening and referral interviews, (2) printed job listings for student self-referral, (3) in-school interviews by employers, and (4) the sending of information about students to employers.

Methods for keeping track of program outcomes usually include recording (1) screening interviews, (2) referrals, (3) employer contacts, (4) class presentations, (5) visits to industry, and (6) job and other placements.

Career Guidance and Preemployment Preparation

The career guidance and preemployment preparation element typically provides opportunities for placement staff to collaborate with other school staff. Although it is recommended that placement programs function as an integral part of career guidance programs, the extent to which developmental career guidance is provided varies widely.

Activities related to this element should ensure that students receive assistance in developing skills needed for obtaining and retaining employment. Information about career advancement and transferable skills should also be provided. Activities should include counseling and classroom instruction. Students need help in locating jobs, preparing personal papers, interviewing, making decisions related to jobs, and beginning and keeping jobs. Depending upon the special needs of students, special emphasis may be given to communications skills, behavioral skills, or work attitudes. Terminology associated with such efforts includes employability skills, life and work skills, occupational essentials, job search skills, and transition skills.

Follow-Up Evaluations

The placement process is rarely thoroughly evaluated. In his treatment of occupational education evaluation, Wentling (1980) points out that the failure to evaluate *processes* is a common problem in many evaluation systems. As a result, we may wind up knowing *how* we did but not knowing *why*. Wentling also points to the need for improving relationships among context, input, process, and product evaluation, in order to generate evaluative data that can be used for planning, developing personnel, improving programs, and ensuring financial accountability.

Follow-up studies of former students and of employers should be planned and conducted as part of a comprehensive placement program. Such activities are needed to evaluate educational and placement program effectiveness and to generate information useful for improving programs.

The Vocational Education Amendments of 1976 require that vocational education program completers and school leavers (eleventh and twelfth grade) be surveyed to determine the extent to which they have found employment related to their programs. Employers of former students (employed in related jobs) are asked to evaluate students' training and preparation for employment.

These requirements are implemented through the Vocational Education Data System (VEDS), by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The purpose of this system is to generate reliable, compatible data for national planning and accountability efforts (Brannon 1981). Each state is responsible for ensuring that data is collected by local schools and that statewide reports are compiled in a format consistent with VEDS requirements.

The VEDS program requires minimum local follow-up studies, but allows for additional data gathering. Information useful for evaluation and program improvement may be collected, including that for (1) identifying needs for program revision; (2) making decisions about program expansion or reduction; (3) providing teachers with feedback on the quality of their performance; and (4) developing improved public relations efforts (Brannon 1981).

Follow-up surveys should be planned in cooperation with representatives of the community, including employers. Information to be collected might include (1) reasons for part-time employment; (2) length of time required to find employment; (3) numbers and reasons for job changes; and (4) student evaluations of vocational education programs.

The need for assurance that data needed for job placement program evaluation and improvement will be included in the local follow-up efforts is one major reason that this element is recommended as a vital part of placement programs. Additionally, of course, the placement program should have the kind of access to employers and former students that makes it the most effective means of gathering and ensuring utilization of follow-up information.

Evaluation procedures for program operations are typically not as well delineated as other operational aspects of most programs. Program evaluation should include periodic reviews of program records by the job placement program advisory committee. These records should relate to stated objectives and include evaluation of career days by participants, reports of the benefits of employer contacts from teachers, and evaluation of program effectiveness by students and employers. Public relations activities, such as posters, newsletters, brochures, audiovisual presentations, public service announcements, and participation in community groups and special events, should be included.

Utilization of Follow-Up Results

The use of information from follow-up evaluations for program planning (follow-through) is widely recommended in the literature (Wasil 1976b; Shippen and Wasil 1977; Strong et al. 1975). Wirtz (1975) notes that follow-through activities need to be assessed and further developed. He suggests that little evidence of practice is available.

Information from student and employer follow-up evaluations is needed for making decisions about program effectiveness. Although specific items to be assessed should be related to stated

objectives of the placement plan, examples of useful information beyond minimum requirements might be obtained through the following questions:

- Were students aware of the placement program while in school?
- Did students utilize the placement program? If not, why not?
- What source of information outside of the placement program were most helpful to students?
- How effective were employment skill development efforts?
- What suggestions do students have for improvement of specific program elements?

Local job placement program advisory committees should periodically review follow-up activities to determine if they are adequate. Information from follow-up studies can be valuable for operational and career guidance and pre-employment preparation activities. The identification of former students' employers is useful for public relations efforts, job development, and the development of a pool of resource persons.

Contact with former students can be similarly helpful. Some schools publish a directory that includes a brief biographical sketch of former students. These directories provide students with information about career paths, salaries, job titles, and additional training needs.

Data analysis can produce additional information through comparisons of (1) geographic region of employment; (2) school program enrollment; (3) pre-employment program completion; (4) work-study or work-experience program participation; (5) declared career goal; and (6) postsecondary program enrollment. Such information should be made available to teachers and advisory committees and incorporated in prevocational guidance and public relations programs. Program improvement through the use of follow-up results provides a major distinction between comprehensive job placement programs from job placement services.

Joliet (Illinois) Township High Schools, District 204 has, for a number of years, gathered follow-up information for an annual report. This report is used throughout the school system for planning, guidance, career information, and evaluation activities. Appropriately enough, the annual report is entitled *If They Tell Us, Will We Listen?* (1976).

VARIATIONS IN PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

Although the program elements previously discussed are found in virtually all of the models and programs studied, their implementation varies significantly. For example, public relations activities conceived as part of planning and coordination become, in practice, important to the operational aspects of many programs. Follow-up data are used primarily for program improvement, but they are also widely used in both placement operations and career guidance and preemployment activities.

In addition to these variations, programs have differing structures and types of organization. Some of these are apparent in descriptions of job placement programs in various states.

Variations Among States

The Florida legislature was the first to mandate job placement and follow-up services for public school students. Reasons for this action are specified in the 1973 legislation.

> The basic purpose of education is to prepare students to become productive, employable, and self-supporting members of society, and the problem of transition from school to work is of critical importance. Despite this fact, the public school system does not provide job placement services or adequate employment counseling for students leaving the public school either as graduates or dropouts. Lack of such services is a significant factor in the high rate of youth unemployment, which is consistently more than three times as high as the unemployment rates for all ages. (quoted in National Association 1977, Appendix A)

This legislation requires each district (including area vocational schools) to provide job placement and follow-up services for all exiting students. The responsibility, wherever possible, is that of guidance counselors and occupational and placement specialists. Job placement personnel are responsible for reporting to the school board curriculum deficiencies that apparently adversely affect students' employability.

The state board of education was given responsibility for developing guidelines and implementation procedures for job placement and follow-up programs. A system of district-wide placement programs has resulted. A coordinator is usually responsible for all program elements. District staff persons give technical assistance to designated local schools, where they work with counselors, placement specialists, and occupational information specialists.

Centralized comprehensive programs are found in several states with regional education service units. One of these states is Michigan where job placement programs have been implemented throughout most of the state in intermediate school districts, as a result of legislative mandate. Another is the state of Virginia which passed legislation in 1975 requiring the provision of job placement services to public school students (National Association 1977).

Those states that have developed specific guidelines for comprehensive placement programs have typically encouraged schools to cooperate with public employment and vocational rehabilitation services. They also have suggested some means for coordinating employment services for special school populations, such as potential dropouts and handicapped students.

Missouri implemented a statewide system to coordinate a comprehensive placement program for graduates of secondary and postsecondary vocational education programs (Noland and Cass n.d.). Although participation in the system, which is supported by state vocational education funds, is voluntary, it has grown steadily. State staff persons have contributed to this growth through the provision of planning, coordination, and inservice education to placement coordinators from participating schools.

Job placement program models for program coordination activities generally recommended in the literature are implemented throughout Missouri. For example, guidance, instructional, and administrative staff at participating schools are provided with inservice education by state staff persons as most models specify. Workshops inform school personnel about their roles in the job placement program and about the operation of the statewide system. Public relations activities, job development efforts, and follow-up studies are conducted by state staff to support local programs.

The benefits of these programs include the following: (1) reducing the cost of local programs; (2) providing consistent local, regional, and state data on employment trends, program effectiveness, and students; and (3) providing information about new developments to local placement staff.

Another statewide program is Delaware's Jobs for Delaware Graduates (*Jobs* 1981). A nonprofit corporation serves as the administrative body. Financial support is derived through fund raising and contractual agreements with community groups, the Office of the Governor, and CETA agencies.

State and regional staffs provide local chapters with training and technical assistance, including planning, coordination, public relations, materials, and evaluation procedures. The program is implemented locally by job placement specialists (one for each thirty students in the program), who are responsible for (1) selecting students into the program, (2) teaching pre-employment skills, (3) job development, (4) placement, and (5) postplacement follow-up and assistance (for up to nine months after the student leaves school).

Targeted students are those who are enrolled in neither vocational education nor college preparation programs, who are expected to graduate, and who request help in finding employment. Students are selected for the program by a variety of means, including personal interviews, interest and aptitude assessment, and referrals from teachers. The Jobs for Delaware Graduates program indicates that students who participate in classroom activities and student club conferences and competitions demonstrate improved attendance, increased motivation to seek employment, and improved self-confidence.

The Delaware program is being replicated in six other states through a program known as Jobs for America's Graduates (*Jobs* 1981). The program contains most of the elements common to other job placement programs. These appear, however, to be implemented independently of other school programs. The most obvious differences are the requirements to form a corporation and to involve representatives of business, industry, labor, and government in planning and organizing the program. The project advisory committee includes representatives of both government and industry.

Several of the other program implementation strategies are unique also. Some examples are as follows:

- Limiting services through student selection criteria
- The student-specialist ratio of 30:1
- Operating independently from the host school
- Providing both curricular and cocurricular preemployment skills development activities

Although the program is not a comprehensive job placement program (it does not serve vocational education students), it is an innovative and promising concept. Program successes in Arizona, Massachusetts, Tennessee, and Missouri will provide information about the feasibility of this model.

The development of job placement programs is a concern in many other states, but for most of them, implementation is a matter of local discretion. Many state education departments have funded the development and dissemination of models, guidelines, and staff development resources to assist local schools in developing programs.

In Ohio, Michigan, and Texas, state-sponsored inservice education programs have increased incentives for program implementation by localities. Participating personnel receive certification. Partial reimbursement of certified placement specialists' salaries by the state is an incentive to districts to provide programming. Nationwide, effective programs have been developed in response to such initiatives.

Other programs have been developed out of local concern, and these have been implemented in schools, school districts, or on regional bases. Some have resulted from cooperative efforts between schools and work-education councils or other community-based organizations. Funding for these programs is obtained from sources such as school boards, state education departments, and CETA prime sponsors. Little information is available regarding the exact extent to which local schools have implemented comprehensive job placement programs. The literature suggests, however, that an increasing number of schools are obtaining funding and implementing programs.

Variations Between Secondary and Postsecondary Programs

The literature reveals general agreement on the elements necessary for effective job placement programs. Certain variations in program implementation, however, are evident at different educational levels.

Much of the vocational education literature that deals with job placement describes secondary programs (Atlanta Public Schools n.d.; Buckingham 1972; Calendine and Fleming 1972; Pigg 1979). Job placement programs for postsecondary vocational students are described less frequently in the vocational education literature (Wiley 1972). Community college placement programs are generally much like university placement offices, now called career planning and placement centers. Community colleges have recently been admitted to the College Placement Council, the professional development and information network for postsecondary placement personnel.

Although the goals of postsecondary placement programs are much the same as those of secondary programs, programming is dictated by special needs of adults, such as (1) retraining, (2) gaining proficiency in English, and (3) overcoming basic educational deficiencies. Programming is generally provided for a greater variety of vocational training programs. Adult students' use of career guidance services is voluntary; thus, more resources must go toward program promotion.

Community college placement programs tend to emphasize referrals less and often omit the screening of applicants. Weekly job bulletins, computerized job lists, individualized instruction in job search techniques, and student-scheduled recruiter interviews are some of the means used to provide for adults' needs.

Variations in Organization

Placement programs are organized by a variety of agencies in various combinations. Schools often jointly sponsor programs. Business, industry, or labor groups offer programs, sometimes in cooperation with schools. Various government agencies provide services, occasionally in cooperation with schools or other groups. Such arrangements provide jointly administered, centralized programs, or school-based programs in which some functions are the responsibility of an outside group.

The most common collaborative organization is one operated by a central administrative staff that provides citywide job placement services. Job development staff register and interview students and conduct preemployment activities in the schools. In some programs, placement coordinators are housed in the schools. In others, guidance counselors or other staff persons are designated to work with central office placement staff. Such programs often expand to serve adjoining districts.

State employment services (now called Job Services) provide job placement staff in many schools. One program, the Wisconsin Model, is so successful that it was recommended to state employment services by the U.S. Department of Labor (Strong, Kosmo, Hammerstrom, Boss, and Hartz 1975). Job Service representatives are assigned to one or more schools and formal agreements are signed by schools and employment services.

The extent to which these agency representatives adapt procedures to the needs of students seems to vary widely, as does the reaction of staff and students to their presence. An Ohio study indicates that administrators, staff, and students prefer school placement coordinators to employment service representatives, however, employment service representatives believe they are more effective than school personnel (*A Program Review* 1978).

Some school placement programs operate with shared funding and staff. Some programs are initiated through CETA funding (to serve CETA-eligible students) and expanded to serve all students by the addition of staff from the school district or the employment service. State vocational education funds for handicapped and disadvantaged students also support such programs.

Collaboration among business, industry, and labor groups and schools has increased recently. For example, the Tri-County Industry-Education-Labor Council in Peoria, Illinois, has provided career education support services to area schools for several years (Musgrove 1978). Emphasis is placed on developing good communications between schools and the business community.

Directories of community resources have been published by education-work committees in several communities. These groups also often sponsor career day programs during which employers interview students.

TODAY'S PROGRAMS

Legislation

School-based job placement programs are regulated not only by the laws that apply to educational agencies but also by those that regulate public and private employment agencies as well. Program planners must ensure compliance with these regulations and develop systems for monitoring legislative changes. Program planners and operators should be familiar with the following legislation.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in federally funded programs. *Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* provides for equal opportunity in employment. Requirements are spelled out in the *Office for Civil Rights Guidelines*, which prohibit discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Under these guidelines, school placement staffs are responsible for ensuring that their practices are nondiscriminatory and, in addition, that employers with whom they work comply with these guidelines. Any written agreements with employers must contain assurance of such compliance.[2]

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs.[3]

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination and restrictive practices in the counseling and placement of handicapped persons.[4]

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 regulates the release of school records and requires that written permission be obtained from students (or the parents of students under age eighteen) before letters of reference from teachers, students' grades, attendance records, resumes, or test results are communicated to employers.[5]

The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1976 establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, equal pay, record keeping, and child labor standards.[6]

Employer procedures for contact, taking of job orders, interactions with student records, and referral practices must comply with all relevant legislation.

In addition to complying with regulations, placement programs must teach students about their employment rights. Since federal guidelines are subject to interpretation, placement

[1]Civil Rights Act of 1964, P.L. No. 88-352, 79 Stat. 437; Equal Employment Opportunity Act, P.L. No. 92-261, 86 Stat. 103 (codified at 42 U.S.C. §§ 2000e et. seq. (1976)). For the Office for Civil Rights Guidelines, see 44 Fed. Reg. 17 (1979).

[2]Education Amendments of 1972, P.L. No. 92-318, 86 Stat. 235.

[3]Rehabilitation Act of 1973, P.L. No. 93-112, 87 Stat. 355 (codified at 29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq. (1976)).

[4]Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, P.L. No. 94-63, 89 Stat. 306.

[5]Fair Labor Standards Act, 29 U.S.C. § 201 et seq. (1976).

program staff should provide students with a list of questions that employers are not permitted to ask in job interviews. Students may need special help in handling questions about arrests or police records, periods of psychiatric treatment, or the relevance of physical handicaps to specific jobs.

State legislation affecting employment and child labor practices should also be monitored to ensure both compliance and the delivery of accurate information to students and staff. All areas of employment have been affected by legislation. Interpreting this legislation to students and staff is an important responsibility of job placement program staff.

Services for Special Populations

The increase in in-school and community services for youth and adults with special needs has special importance for job placement programs. Many programs include responsibilities for placement and supportive services for the priority populations that are served. CETA programs are required to provide job-related skill training, labor market information, employability or pre-employment skill development, and job placement and follow-up services to their clients.

Increased emphasis has been placed on linkage in order to bring CETA and vocational education programs closer together. Many schools are cooperating with CETA programs by providing or sharing facilities for (1) career resource centers, (2) computerized guidance systems, (3) job development activities, (4) employer advisory groups, (5) job preparation classes, (6) vocational assessment centers, (7) job search clubs, (8) job data banks, and (9) job placement services.

Without a systematic program approach, these activities operate independently of or in competition with existing activities, creating problems for both staff and students. Duplication of efforts and resources, confusion about eligibility for services, and inconsistent public relations programs hamper the efforts of both school and special program personnel.

Programs designed to increase the enrollment of members of minority groups, females, handicapped students, and students with limited-English-speaking ability in vocational education programs often include responsibilities for providing career and labor market information. They also include specialized job development and preemployment skills development. These services are provided either by programs especially designed for these populations or by regular school placement staff. In cooperative arrangements, program objectives and staff reponsibilities are clearly defined so that students may be effectively served.

Preemployment Skills Training

Increased interest in providing preemployment skill development is a continuing trend throughout education. Hartz (1978) reports that this growth in emphasis on preemployment skills reflects the trend toward more systematic assessment of skills through pre- and posttesting. The use of task analysis for curriculum development is also related. An example of the trend is provided by a handbook on transition skills for disadvantaged youth by Wircenski et al. (1981).

While the development of resources for preemployment skills training is increasingly systematic, the manner in which these materials are used in the schools appears to be somewhat unsystematic. Teachers and counselors who teach these skills have good intentions, but doing

so without adequate information about employment practices may result in unsatisfactory outcomes. The expertise gained by job placement program staff through regular contacts with employers is a major reason why many theorists and practitioners in the field assign responsibilities for preemployment skill development to this group.

Information Systems

Many job placement programs have recently implemented computerized job placement services. Although little information is available about the extent and effectiveness of such systems, job placement does appear to be moving into the computer age. Most programs are locally developed computer subsystems or adaptations of commercially available computerized career guidance systems.

Joliet Junior College and the public schools in Joliet, Illinois, have worked together for several years to build a system to collect local labor market information using a computerized information system. The system also provides a means for computerized matching of students and jobs. Both systems are models that may be further developed or adapted by other schools.

A national network for occupational information made up of the Career Information Delivery System (CIDS) and the National Occupational Information Coordinating Council (NOICC) is another example of the trend toward information systems. The NOICC system includes information systems in each state known as State Occupational Information Coordinating Councils (SOICCs). The Michigan Department of Education (1980) estimates that the Michigan Occupational Information System (MOIS), an example of a SOICC, is currently operational in about 90 percent of the state's high schools, where it has been integrated into the package of placement services offered by several programs.

Placement program staff persons in the Saginaw (Michigan) Independent School District assign MOIS job codes to current job openings and provide applicants with a MOISCRIPT (occupational description) in preparation for their job interview. Student placement registrations are also coded with MOIS job codes so that students may be matched with current job openings by the computer.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Program Improvement

As previously noted, the placement of vocational education graduates and program completers into related employment is the chief accountability factor implied by the legislation. The relationship of job placement programs to vocational education and to the reported employment of graduates is, however, so vague that the matter of accountability is very much at issue. Although vocational education programs are required to report the employment placements of former students, they are not always required to provide job placement services nor to report on efforts made to place students.

Basing accountability on follow-up data treats placement as an event, rather than as a process that occurs over time. It also defines students as the product by which vocational education programs are judged. It is assumed that if students obtain employment related to their programs, vocational education is effective. The converse is assumed to be true also.

These ideas fail to take into account the developmental nature of the individual and the nature of the involved processes. Some questions related to this issue are as follows:

- If the student fails to obtain training-related employment, was the vocational education program ineffective?
- If the vocational education program was ineffective, in what ways was it ineffective?
- Are job placement programs the remedy for unsatisfactory placement rates by vocational education programs?
- If so, how can they be funded and integrated into vocational education programs?

The literature suggests several benefits of job placement programs to schools, communities, and students. Potential benefits of job placement programs to schools include improved communications with employers, information about needed improvements in vocational education programs, and improvements in staff development and instructional programs through the consultative function of the job placement program. Supposed economic benefits to the community include reduction in youth unemployment; improved relevance of vocational education programs, thus reducing industry training costs; and reduced recruiting costs.

Benefits to students of effective job placement programs are manifested in developmental terms. They include (1) improved school attendance; (2) improved attitudes toward work; (3) acquisition of job-seeking skills; (4) better entry-level pay; and (5) greater satisfaction with vocational education programs. Although the number of job placement programs has increased tremendously in recent years, documentation of these benefits and of program effectiveness is lacking.

The use of student placements (in program-related employment) as the criterion for measuring vocational education program effectiveness does not sufficiently discriminate among the variables that affect outcomes. Federal, state, and local vocational education plans should be developed based on (1) empirical data about the cost-effectiveness of various placement program structures and (2) comparative evaluations of the effectiveness of various state programs.

Research on the subject should be designed so that it does the following:

- Examines the appropriateness of the use of placement in program-related employment as a criterion for measuring vocational education program success
- Provides for the developmental nature of both the educational and placement processes
- Identifies the benefits of job placement programs for students (in developmental terms), schools (in terms of employee involvement), and communities (in terms of economic benefits)
- Documents the effectiveness of job placement programs
- Defines the relationships between school-based job placement programs and those of other agencies serving youth
- Identifies the effects of school-based programs sponsored by community agencies on school programs
- Provides for variations in labor market conditions
- Provides for differing student selection criteria and student characteristics
- Identifies student purposes for enrolling in vocational education programs
- Investigates potential lifetime benefits for students of job placement programs

Only by beginning to gather data from such research efforts can we develop job placement programs truly responsive to the needs of vocational education and to the presently used legislative measure for accountability. States where mandated job placement programs are operating provide excellent opportunities for research.

Staff Development

Staff development programs must be provided, in the near future, for the variety of staff persons in various roles who are involved in the delivery of job placement services. Some questions to be answered in designing such programs are as follows:

- How can staff development programs be most effectively designed?
- What competencies are required to plan and operate effective programs?
- What competencies must be taught in staff development programs?

- How can effective preservice training be delivered to placement staff hired from outside of the field of education?

- Should certification for job placement program staff be required? If so, by whom should staff development programs be provided?

Content

The increase in programs providing preemployment skills development and increased use of information systems (including computers) create a need for staff development programs on these topics. The regulations affecting job placement programs will be constantly changing and, perhaps, increasing in number and scope. Vocational education legislation will no doubt change with reauthorization. Staff development program content related to these specific topics will need to change with the legislation.

Summary

Job placement programs are now an accepted part of America's secondary and postsecondary school programs. In several states they are required by legislation. The development of these programs has been a challenge for educators during the past decades.

The challenge of the future is the provision of additional programs and higher quality services. Research and development in areas related to vocational education and job placement can provide the information needed to do so. Job placement program personnel and others in the education field can make valuable contributions to the future of placement programs by making available information about successful programs. Perhaps this paper will encourage them to do so.

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